

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

A FUTURE FOR LEARNERS:

A VISION FOR RENEWAL OF
EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



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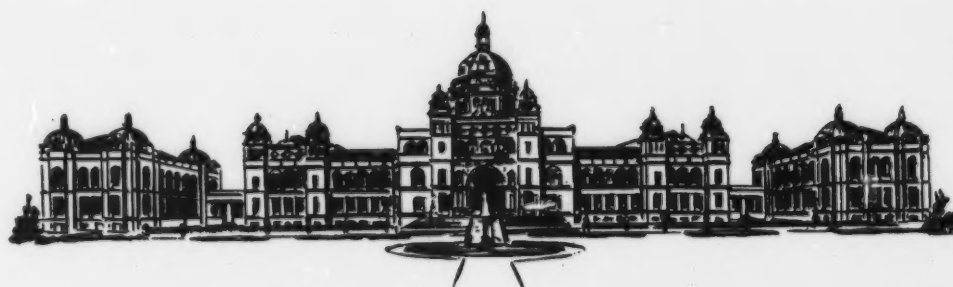


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The Legislative Assembly of
British Columbia



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A VISION FOR RENEWAL OF
EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



Select Standing Committee on Education
Report
2002

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March 28, 2002

To the Honourable,
The Legislative Assembly of the
Province of British Columbia
Victoria, British Columbia

Honourable Members:

I have the honour to present herewith *A Future for Learners: A Vision for Renewal of Education in British Columbia*, the report of the Select Standing Committee on Education for the Third Session of the Thirty-Seventh Parliament.

The report covers the work of the Committee with respect to measures to improve access, choice, flexibility and quality in public education and measures to strengthen our network of colleges, institutes and on-line learning throughout the province.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

Wendy McMahon, MLA
Chair



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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

Members

Wendy McMahon, MLA	Chair	<i>Columbia River-Revelstoke</i>
Reni Masi, MLA	Deputy Chair	<i>Delta North</i>
Elayne Brenzinger, MLA		<i>Surrey-Whalley</i>
Tom Christensen, MLA		<i>Okanagan-Vernon</i>
Jenny Kwan, MLA (to February 12, 2002)		<i>Vancouver-Mount Pleasant</i>
Richard T. Lee, MLA		<i>Burnaby North</i>
Brenda Locke, MLA		<i>Surrey-Green Timbers</i>
Karn Manhas, MLA		<i>Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain</i>
Rob Nijjar, MLA		<i>Vancouver-Kingsway</i>
Sheila Orr, MLA		<i>Victoria-Hillside</i>
Richard Stewart, MLA		<i>Coquitlam-Maillardville</i>

Clerks to the Committee

Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Clerk Assistant and Committee Clerk

Anne Stokes, Committee Clerk

Consultants to the Committee

Bob Johnstone

Tarry A. Grieve

Committee Research Staff

Wynne MacAlpine, Committee Research Analyst

Pamela C.B.F. Grant, Assistant Researcher

TERMS OF REFERENCE

On August 27, 2001, Select Standing Committee on Education was empowered to examine, inquire into and make recommendations by consulting with educators, students, parents, administrators and other British Columbians on the following matters:

1. (a) measures to improve access, choice, flexibility and quality in public education; and
(b) measures to strengthen our network of colleges, institutes and on-line learning throughout the province.
2. Consider any other matters referred to the Committee by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Advanced Education.
3. Prepare a report no later than February 28, 2002 on the results of those consultations.

In addition to the powers previously conferred upon the Select Standing Committee on Education, the Committee shall be empowered:

- (a) to appoint of their number, one or more subcommittees and to refer such subcommittees any of the matters referred to the Committee;
- (b) to sit during a period in which the House is adjourned and during any sitting of the House;
- (c) to adjourn from place to place as may be convenient;
- (d) to retain such personnel as required to assist the Committee;

and shall report to the House as soon as possible, or following any adjournment or at the next following Session, as the case may be; to deposit the original of its reports with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly during a period of adjournment and upon resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present all reports to the Legislative Assembly.

The Committee was reappointed to complete its work on February 13, 2002, and on February 27, received a revised instruction from the House to complete its work and final report by March 28, 2002.

COMMITTEE PROCESS

On August 27, 2001, the Legislative Assembly empowered the Select Standing Committee on Education to examine, inquire into and make recommendations by consulting with educators, students, parents, administrators and other British Columbians on the following matters:

1. (a) measures to improve access, choice, flexibility and quality in public education; and
(b) measures to strengthen our network of colleges, institutes and on-line learning throughout the province.
2. Consider any other matters referred to the Committee by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Advanced Education.
3. Prepare a report no later than February 28, 2002 on the results of those consultations

The Committee, which was re-appointed to complete its remaining work on February 13, 2002, is composed of ten members of the Legislative Assembly. On February 27, the Committee received an extension of its reporting deadline to March 28, 2002.

The mandate of the Committee was to listen to all British Columbians and to report its recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.

The Committee held five initial public meeting sessions in Victoria, during which presentations by key education stakeholder groups were received.

The Committee also invited both written and oral submissions from the public. In late October a quarter-page announcement ran in daily and weekly newspapers throughout BC inviting people to make written submissions to the Committee or register to present at a public hearing. A website was developed and advertised, with meeting schedules, as well as a Committee brochure.

In advance of each hearing, advertisements were again placed in selected regional daily and weekly newspapers. Radio ads were broadcast in advance of each public hearing, and media releases were sent out to regional media. Prospective witnesses registered with the Office of the Clerk of Committees to reserve a speaking time, and time was also made available at the public hearings for unscheduled speakers, who were allowed to register at the door whenever possible.

A travel schedule that included public hearings in 10 communities in various regions of British Columbia was undertaken:

Surrey	Thursday, November 1
Dawson Creek	Monday, November 5
Cranbrook	Wednesday, November 7
Kelowna	Thursday, November 8
Victoria	Tuesday, November 20
Queen Charlotte City	Wednesday, November 21
Houston	Thursday, November 22
Prince George	Friday, November 23

Port Coquitlam
Vancouver

Monday, December 10
Tuesday, December 11

The Committee heard from more than 690 people and organizations. Submissions included 409 oral presentations at public hearings (of which 292 were also submitted in writing) and 281 written submissions. Full transcripts of the Committee's public hearings are available at www.legis.gov.bc.ca/CMT/.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the work of several individuals who aided the Committee at all stages of its work. Bob Johnstone and Tarry Grieve, Consultants to the Committee, facilitated the Committee's final meetings, drafted the report and provided significant assistance to the Members. The staff of the Office of the Clerk of Committees provided administrative, research and procedural support to the Committee throughout all stages of its work. The Members also wish to thank the Hansard staff who traveled with the Committee to record and transcribe the public hearings.

Above all, the Committee wishes to extend its sincere thanks to the many British Columbians who took the time to write and present their ideas for consideration.

FOCUS OF COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS

In addressing its terms of reference and on consideration of what was learned throughout its proceedings, the Committee focussed primarily on the needs of learners and on the interests of the citizens of British Columbia, both locally and provincially. In so doing, the Committee chose to undertake five tasks:

1. To review the submissions,
2. To identify the critical problems (shortcomings) of the current system,
3. To identify the significant barriers that must be addressed in order for the current system to achieve a preferred future,
4. To identify strategies for system improvement, and
5. To make recommendations that will:
 - a) cause the British Columbia education system to be more results-oriented and outcome-based,
 - b) challenge existing mental sets that detract from positive change,
 - c) lead to interventions that are both strategic and systemic, and
 - d) foster cultural as well as structural changes to the current system.

THE SUBMISSIONS

The public hearings held by the Select Standing Committee on Education provided interested British Columbians with an opportunity to appear before the Committee and make known their views about the British Columbia education system.

Throughout its hearings, the Committee was impressed by the expressed desire of educators, students, parents, boards, business representatives and other members of the community to renew what is generally considered to be a good public education system, but nevertheless a system that, to become truly world-class, could improve.

The over 690 submissions made to the Committee comment on many positive features of the British Columbia education system, and they provide numerous suggestions and recommendations for improvement that are relevant to the Committee's terms of reference.

Evident in many of the submissions is much about the current British Columbia education system that is to be lauded and admired. High standards of achievement, as measured by international tests; a significant proportion of students enrolled in Math 12, in comparison with most European countries; the provision of support for students with special needs; the generally equitable distribution of resources; an increasing variety of programs; a growing relationship between colleges and universities and industry and business; and the establishment of centres of research excellence are but a few examples of quality.

Also evident in the submissions is much about aspects of the education system that can be improved. The graduation rate, particularly for Aboriginal students; the availability of and access to technical and trades programs; the number of students graduating from advanced degree programs; the ease of transfer of credits from one institution to another; the quantity, quality and success of meaningful parent input and involvement; and the ability of the system to respond to local and provincial interests are but a few examples of areas in need of improvement.

"Enhanced linkages between universities, business and government in the pursuit of a common interest in economic revitalization [is needed]" — Dr. Charles Jago and Don Avison, University Presidents Council. Written Submission.

"In BC we're a net exporter of students.... We continue to have more British Columbians going away [to university] than people coming here, and many of those people don't make their way back here." — Don Avison, University Presidents Council. Victoria stakeholder meeting, October 16, 2001.

"We don't do a good job from grade zero to post-PhD of being flexible about certification. There are many skills people get, but unless they get the Dogwood or finish to get the BA, there's no certification. There should be. It may not be that the only way is to go through grade 12 and then go into a college or into a university." — Dr. Harold Bassford, University College of the Fraser Valley. Written Submission.

"You can see that our community profile is similar to many small resource-based communities in our province. Our issues include poverty, isolation, lack of services, vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse, low literacy rates, transportation, unemployment, lack of youth programming services and lack of resources for families and single parents. Many of our K-to-12 students leave school prior to high school completion. We also have low levels of high school completion among our adult population." — Joanne Ellis. Cranbrook public hearing. November 7, 2001.

"There can be improvements to the way we educate students in this province. These improvements cannot be dropped into the system without meaningful input from teachers, the public and the business community." — David Halme, Lake Cowichan Teachers Association, Victoria public hearing, November 20, 2001.

The Committee values the input it received from presenters around the province. The information and views put forward to the committee assisted greatly in the preparation of this report which focuses on improvements to the British Columbia education system. For those interested in greater detail than is reflected in this report, full transcripts for all committee proceedings and summaries of all written submissions can be found at the Committee's website: www.legis.gov.bc.ca/cmt

What follows is a brief synopsis of the submissions as they relate to five themes.

1. Importance of Education
2. Current Initiatives
3. Local Involvement
4. Access, Choice and Flexibility
5. Quality and Accountability

1. Importance of Education

Apparent in the submissions is a public consensus about the importance of education to the economic prospects and social welfare of both the individual learner and the society. Many submissions emphasize that learners should be afforded opportunity to attain goals to do with their intellectual, social, individual, and vocational development. Others suggest that greater emphasis should be given to preparing learners to meet the province's human resource needs and that there should be a closer link between work opportunities and schooling, especially at the secondary and post-secondary levels. These two views illustrate the broad issue of whether or not schooling should emphasize community interests or individual interests.

The submissions also reflect a belief in the intrinsic worth of education; a belief that it is better to be well educated than to be poorly educated. Further, the submissions reflect societal belief that an educated citizenry has considerable social and economic value for the individual and thus for society. Substantial research exists, much of which was included in the submissions, to support the claim that the world of employment rewards those who can think flexibly and solve problems in creative ways. This claim is true for students who attend university after graduating from secondary school and also for students who enter other

avenues of education or enter the work force directly. It is also apparent that the learners of today must be equipped to be life-long learners who will move into and out of formal education or training opportunities throughout their adult lives. To be effective today, a system that contributes to life-long learning must meet the needs of all learners in all environments, not just those inside a formal system.

"Schools are microcosms that reflect all that is good in human society: music, literature, science and sports. Education has a very positive and important role. We as teachers encourage, guide and instruct our children in all that is good and worthwhile in culture. Students are microcosms that reflect all that is good in human society: music, literature, science and sports. Schools are not a business training ground. How we educate our children determines the values and virtues of our society's future. Our children need to become aware of issues in our society. Students must become aware of ecological and environmental issues challenging our growing population. They must learn to become aware of and tolerant of cultural and individual differences. Public education creates the environment that best addresses these issues. Emphasizing the role of public education, Neil Postman once stated that public education is the public. Everyone is involved and affected by what happens in our schools. Education is a crucial prerequisite for any democracy." — Ben Vriend, Computer-Using Educators of B.C. Port Coquitlam public hearing, December 10, 2001.

Also addressed in the submissions are issues of unemployment, preparedness of the citizens of British Columbia for the new economy, and concerns about the performance and purposes of education. It is clear that these issues are of considerable interest to learners, parents, educators, business, and the public at large.

Within these issues lie deep concerns about British Columbia's intellectual, scientific and economic competitiveness, nationally and internationally. Reflections of such concerns are requests that the system: improve access to further training and education for workers and students; increase the degree of choice and flexibility within the current arrangements; and strengthen linkages between all components of the system.

"Non-academic post-secondary alternatives courses and programs are needed. Broaden the curriculum so that students who do not want to continue to university can find a program that prepares them for what they want to do. There are many careers that do not require university studies, such as the practical and performing arts, technology, and trades. These careers are as self-realizing and as well paid as those requiring a university degree.

[Develop] 'specialty' or 'magnet' schools [that] can offer career skill courses and programs. During the secondary years, students can develop their knowledge and skills in many career areas beyond the exploratory/ introductory level now provided."
— Dr. Shirley M. Wong, University of British Columbia. Written Submission.

The Committee notes that these issues are not unique to British Columbia. Similar expressions of concern are found in reports of the Organization for Education, Cooperation, and Development and in statements of governments of other Canadian provinces as is

illustrated by the 1993 UNESCO Report, *Review and Commentary on Schooling in Canada*. That report concludes that the issues concerning education in Canada include: ambiguity in government policy, a struggle between educational agendas, a tension between meeting the interests of the community and the interests of the individual, a confusion as to who is in charge of public education, the need for new models of governance, a questioning of the monopoly of public education, and the challenges presented by deficit, debt, and the rising costs of education.¹

We are well aware of the economic challenges facing British Columbia and the need to be fiscally prudent if we are to achieve a balanced budget. Education, however, needs to be a top priority, because it is the key to a healthy society and a prosperous economy.

The bottom line is that British Columbia needs a highly educated workforce in order to stay competitive in the global economy. The value of education is clear. Post-secondary graduates have lower-than-average unemployment rates. According to the 2000 labour force survey, university graduates had an unemployment rate of 4 percent compared to 5 percent for college graduates, 7 percent for high school graduates and 13 percent for those who did not complete high school. More notably, however, among those in the 25- to 29-year range in British Columbia, there was a 26 percent unemployment rate for those who had not completed high school.

"...there are approximately 250,000 British Columbians currently receiving income assistance. Fully 84 percent of them have not completed high school. However, high school graduation will not be sufficient to meet the future workforce needs. Employment projections from the Canadian occupation projection system estimate that more than 70 percent of the projected job openings by the year 2008 will require post-secondary completion.

Post-secondary education, therefore, has two positive effects for the provincial economy. First, it produces qualified individuals who are more likely to secure employment and thereby contribute to the provision of government services. Second, it helps reduce the number of people needing social assistance." — David Rees, Centre for Education Information. Victoria stakeholder meeting, October 17, 2001.

2. Current Initiatives

Many submissions (especially those from students, educators, governors of the education system, and major provincial organizations with special interest and expertise in education) present the Committee with detailed background information about the state of the current education system in British Columbia. The submissions made by the K-12 and Post-secondary systems comment on priorities and challenges that they believe must be met in order to achieve their goals. Many of these submissions request endorsement of the current mandate and status quo and of specific plans or goals. The Committee notes that the specific plans, goals and mandates proposed by the K-12 and Post-secondary systems were considered as part of the government's Core Review process.

Some submissions by school districts and organizations direct the Committee's attention to social equity programs provided to children that are funded in whole or in part by

government sources, other than the education ministries. These submissions express a desire for these "non-education" programs to be seen as an integral part of the education system and ask for continued support. Examples include social equity programs such as meals programs, school based-day and after school care programs, inner-city school programs, youth worker programs, multi-cultural workers, and community school programs. The rationale for assigning responsibility for social equity programs to the education system stresses the need to recognize that without adequate social supports, many learners are unable to succeed in school.

"Britannia is an inner-city school of approximately 240, and I can honestly say that I think we would be lost without the partnership we share between the community school, community centre and the many support staff that we have. The youth and family workers, the community school coordinator, the food program, the neighbourhood assistant and the project teachers in the inner-city schools all provide service of a preventative nature, academically and socially, to our students. Without early intervention, many of these students would not be successful in school. Picture the student who goes home alone, cannot do homework because no one is there to help him, eats a piece of bread for dinner and can't sleep at night because there's alcohol and drug abuse, physical abuse and possible sexual abuse going on. He comes to school and attends a breakfast program, where he gets the first nutritious meal in more than 12 hours. He is able to speak to a youth and family worker, get extra help with his work, attend a modified program for extra help and then receive a nutritious meal at lunchtime. Without these services, this child is seriously at risk." — Vicki Singh, Britannia Elementary Community School Parent Advisory Council. Vancouver public hearing, December 11, 2001.

Our challenge, then, is the challenge of poverty. We do know that socio-economic status continues to be the single best predictor of how much schooling students will obtain and how well they'll do in school and in their life beyond school. We do know that poor children will experience an increased likelihood of being illiterate, physically weakened, more vulnerable to behaviour problems, less motivated to learn and delayed in cognitive development. They're more likely to be placed in basic-level vocational programs and also to drop out. — Alva Jenson, Inner City Advisory Committee. Vancouver public hearing, December 11, 2001.

"The service we provided to immigrant and refugee students was assistance with orientation, registration, assessment and placement; facilitating parent involvement in schools; translation of important documents; interpretation of information about students' progress and behaviour; providing cultural and personal information to school administrators, which is something that cannot be done by volunteers but has to be done by professionals; supporting classroom teachers with anti-racist, multicultural lessons and events; helping ESL students and parents understand and navigate our complex education system; and activating a network of multicultural community services in support of the school community." — Ray Power, Burnaby Multicultural Society. Port Coquitlam public hearing, December 10, 2001.

The Committee notes that similar concerns were given extensive consideration by the 1988 Royal Commission on Education. That Commission defined such needs as the need for a learner to have "social capital". Social capital consists of all of those conditions (benefits, resources, social/developmental) that, when present, enable children to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Social capital is not only provided by the family, but also by the extended family, neighbourhood and community. Further, children who have limited access to social capital have a difficult time succeeding. The literature on poverty and educational disadvantage provides extensive documentation of these difficulties.

In response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, social equity programs such as the ones listed above were developed to provide extra support to children with little social capital. These programs were also developed as services to be delivered at or close to the neighbourhood school and in cooperation with the school system and were not to be primarily the responsibility of the education system. Rather, the intent was for parent groups or other agencies to assume responsibility so that the mandate of the school system could be protected from ever-expanding demands on its resources. It therefore appears to the Committee that the issue of responsibility for equity programs is still a matter that needs to be resolved.

Community schools have been instrumental in creating a sense of whole community in these seven neighbourhoods. They educate the children in the daytime, and they share knowledge. They are guided by the belief that successful programs and services respond to the child as part of a family, to the family as part of a neighbourhood and to that neighbourhood as part of the larger community of Burnaby. Our schools truly reflect what's going on, on the streets, in the apartments, in the shopping malls, throughout our community. They have become a lifeline for many, many people." — Gary Begin, Burnaby District Community School Advisory and Coordinating Committee. Port Coquitlam public hearing, December 10, 2001.

3. Local Involvement

Many of the submissions advocate, especially on the part of parents and educators, for increased, significant participation in local education affairs. Several submissions speak at length about the social importance of schools and post-secondary institutions in community and neighbourhood life, the value and relevance of local initiatives and choices, and the advantage of making educational decisions, whenever possible, close to and in consultation with those who are affected by the decisions. Some comment on the importance of regional post-secondary programs to the local economy and to access by learners in their region. Others comment on the importance of coordination of the community based services of other ministries.

"Our education system must help sustain our economy and resource-based industries by ensuring that relevant education and training opportunities are locally available. One of the problems we experience every year is the exodus of bright, enthusiastic young people who are required to leave Houston to pursue educational opportunities. Many of these young people subsequently find jobs outside our community, often in the areas they moved to for educational purposes. We believe that training people in

classrooms or by accessing broadband technology in their local communities — either at home, at school or on the job — is a way to ensure that our communities will grow and flourish in the future. This is your opportunity to invest, not divest, in the future of northern communities.” — Bonny Hawley, District of Houston. Houston public hearing. November 22, 2001.

A further concern raised in some submissions is the tendency for over-regulation of the delivery of education programs. The issue concerns the ability of institutions to make decisions that reflect local priorities and needs. A desire for increased discretionary control over the use of assigned resources and for greater decision making authority at the local level is thus apparent.

“The government should allow or give school boards the unfettered rights to modernize the school system.” — Hans Heringa. Written Submission.

“With respect to flexibility, rural colleges are integral with the development of vibrant rural communities. They require resources and autonomy to be flexible and thus respond to their learners and communities in effective ways.” — Marilyn Luscombe, Selkirk College. Cranbrook public hearing, November 7, 2001.

What several of these submissions suggest would be ideal is similar to what the 1988 *Report of the Royal Commission on Education* describes as a “loose and tight” system.

In the broadest sense, it is a system characterized by both ‘loose’ and ‘tight’ properties: ‘loose’ in the sense that greater differentiation, greater choice, greater diversity, and greater freedoms exist for all individuals with the system than at present; ‘tight’ in the sense that there is closer articulation and cooperation among the components of the system, that basic system of monitoring and accountability are strengthened, that funding levels are indexed and predictable, that assignments of roles and responsibilities are better clarified and defined, that zones of authority and jurisdiction are more specifically delineated, and that more appropriate structures are in place for communication, control, and action. It is a system that seeks to free the great human resources . . . from the weight of conflict and uncertainty. Yet, it is also a system that seeks to protect the public good through structures and processes designed to ensure that certain standards are maintained, certain skills and bodies of knowledge are learned, and certain protections are afforded youngsters, parents, teachers, school personnel, and the community in general.²

Finally, with respect to local involvement, parents of students in the K-12 system wish to be involved, not necessarily in active governance matters, but in a meaningful advisory capacity. Unfortunately, for a significant number of parents, the current role of parent advisory councils and opportunities for parent input into significant decisions affecting their children are not seen to be as comprehensive or effective as they could be.

“We feel so often that PACs are expected to be reactive rather than proactive. They’re not given an opportunity to actually participate in the decision-making process but rather are too often expected to react to a decision already made — and possibly even rubber-stamp it. That, we believe, is a lack of genuine partnership. We believe that too often there is a lack of recognition of the value of parent contributions and their

participation, which often results in parents saying they don't feel like there's anyone really listening, and no one really wants to hear their opinion." — Reggi Balabanov, B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils. Written Submission.

4. Access, Choice and Flexibility

4.1 Access

Some of the concerns about access relate to problems of rural and at times isolated communities. Others relate to the scope and depth of course offerings and the failure of British Columbia's schools and post-secondary institutions to meet the needs of all learners, no matter what their cultural, social, economic, emotional, or physical circumstances. Examples of unmet needs put forward by parents and special interest groups concern: learners with special needs, learners who are gifted and/or talented, Aboriginal learners, learners from a different culture and whose first language is not English, and learners adversely affected by poverty and other socio-economic challenges.

"I had originally hoped to complete physics 11 in the first semester of my grade 12 year and physics 12 in the second semester of my grade 12 year. That's not the way I was able to go. They offered both courses in the exact same semester, and that does not make it able for me to successfully complete both courses before I graduate." — Danielle Martens, Lakes District Secondary School. Houston public hearing, November 22, 2001.

"Given that the East Kootenay region has the second-highest youth unemployment rate in B.C., it is difficult for students to access well-paying summer jobs and to help pay for the extra costs entailed in moving out of the region. A student who can actually stay in Cranbrook and live with their family while taking first- and second-year university courses will benefit from additional savings. While we applaud the government's commitment to increase spaces in specific programs, the government must not lose sight of the importance of supporting all the programming which is offered at regional colleges like ours." — Velma McKay, College of the Rockies Faculty Association. Cranbrook public hearing, November 7, 2001.

Concerns related to Aboriginal learners merit special mention. Opportunities for Aboriginal learners remains one of the most important and long-standing issues in education in British Columbia. It is clear from the submissions that a large number of these learners do not experience success as measured by graduation rates, achievement scores, transition rates, and attendance rates. Also clear is need for the system to be more responsive to the needs of these learners within the context of their cultural heritage and in cooperation and partnership with their parents and communities. Increased access and opportunities should assist with the preservation and embodiment of the essential elements of First Nations' cultures and should recognize and facilitate preservation of their heritage.

"At the ministry level you've still got to continue the Aboriginal funding, and it has to be targeted. Native people have to have a say in how it's done. Even if they make mistakes, we've got to allow them to make those mistakes. It's important that they do."

— David Ratray, Peace River North School District. Dawson Creek public hearing, November 5, 2001.

"...when the Ministry of Education decides that funds targeted for Aboriginal education are now for academic improvement only, with support for language and culture removed, the education system's credibility takes a huge hit up here. Get real, guys. More than 50 percent of our population is Haida. Support for language and culture is vital." — Duncan White, Queen Charlotte District Teachers Association. Queen Charlotte City public hearing, November 21, 2001.

Many of the submissions highlight features of the current system that seem to negatively impact on opportunities for learners to access the system. Such features include:

- a) restrictions imposed by schools and institutions regarding recognition of prior and or equivalent learning and acquisition of skills (including those credentials held by new Canadians);
- b) lack of curriculum consistency or uniformity between institutions that appear to be offering the same program;
- c) lack of ability and or flexibility (described by some presenters as willingness) of educators to make decisions that would be in the best interests of the learner or, where relevant, in the best interests of community needs;
- d) a sense that at times the interests of the service providers take precedence over the interests and needs of the learners, the local community, and the Province;
- e) bureaucratic barriers that impede communication, access, and due process; and
- f) increasing university entrance requirements in response to a shortage of spaces thus resulting in graduates from B.C. secondary schools having to move out of province to attend post-secondary institutions; and
- g) limited resources to support learners with financial needs.

4.2 Choice

Issues of access in many respects are also issues of choice, an issue that is complex in meaning. In most submissions, choice is seen to be a fundamental democratic right of learners and, where relevant, the parents of learners. In this context many submissions support the Committee's mandate to achieve greater choice and variety in schooling.

Choice is also seen to be a means of recognizing individual differences among learners as well as acknowledging the right of all learners to have access to an education that is in accordance with their own philosophical beliefs and values and with their career aspirations. For example, several submissions request additional support for independent schools, home schooling, and choice or magnet schools; other submissions ask that regulations be changed to permit learners to attend any school of their or their parent's choice. Finally in this regard, some submissions express concern about contractual provisions or school board policies and priorities that deny or place limits on what many consider to be the right of parents to make choices in the best interests of their children.

"You can ask the students what they are looking for in a good school. We don't expect to be babysat from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day. Some of us want to go to university, some of us want to go on to trade schools and some of us don't even know what the options are out there. Things like career and personal planning are very useful for some students and a waste of time for others. The education system has to realize we are not all the same. We have different interests, different needs and different goals. You cannot say that everyone is the same and teach to a level of mediocrity." — Carolyn Shiau. Port Coquitlam public hearing, December 10, 2001.

"It is time to give parents and students a choice in their education. They need to play a vital role in deciding what form their education should take. We need to trust consumers to make wise choices. Education can be responsive to the needs of the market if we are willing to remove the unnecessary constraints. Once unfettered, electronic delivery programs can reach the size or critical mass needed to create and promote a sound world-class curriculum. Growth is necessary for both excellence and survival. Growth can help us maintain a first-class product." — Brian Malchow, School District 61. Prince George public hearing, November 23, 2001.

"We cannot guarantee a school system with equal accessibility, more flexibility and higher quality, without ensuring that parents have choice. With special needs students it is vitally important for parents to have choice for their children in the way of trained specialist teachers, compatible teacher assistants and programs that meet the needs of their children. If these choices do not exist in a way that provides their child with an equitable education, then they must be allowed to seek that education in another facility that does. The child has the right to a basic education and a free education. Choice must ensure this basic education before branching out to programs that provide educational frills." — Sue Halstead, Learning Disabilities Association of British Columbia, Comox Valley Chapter. Written Submission.

Other submissions indicate that choice within the public K-12 system, especially at the secondary level, is too restrained and too focused on university academic prerequisites. In this regard there is concern that a former decision to increase the number of academic mandatory courses to meet graduation requirements has resulted in fewer students taking optional non-academic courses such as physical education, fine arts, and trades and business oriented courses. Related to the concern about too much emphasis on university academic courses is a request for an increase in alternative secondary school graduation programs that will prepare students for entry into the work place or into non-university education and training programs. In this regard, several submissions express a need for educators and governing bodies to do a better job of informing young people of the value of career and trades related (non-university degree) programs.

"We know about the skills shortage in the trades and the technology areas, yet it is difficult for students to access the curricular experiences in secondary schools that support advanced work in these areas." — Everette Surgenor, Kootenay-Columbia School District. Cranbrook public hearing, November 7, 2001

Another issue is a concern about the inequality of educational opportunities available to learners in rural and isolated areas. Although the majority of learners are in the greater

metropolitan areas of our province's southwest corner, most school districts and colleges serve learners located outside this region. Not all interior districts are rural or isolated; on the contrary, many offer facilities and programs comparable to those of the south coast. Nevertheless, there remains an issue of educational inequality that is the result of geographic location. These challenges include the problem of attracting and retaining qualified, competent personnel, the need to leave one's community to pursue post-secondary education, and the loss of the economic benefits to local communities of locally based education and training opportunities. Relevant to these concerns is the inequity in access to high quality, modern technology and communication networks that may permit alternate ways to address these problems.

"Of course, not everyone is suited to pursue academic and professional careers, but former occupations in forestry and fishing are much less viable than they were. Computer career development is curtailed at present by painfully slow Internet access, as is the possibility of developing virtual classrooms for subjects with low enrolment. That is one area in which we would like to be able to effect change to improve our choices: to have the technical resources to develop programs such as virtual classrooms or, at least, effective on-line instruction." — Maggie Bell-Brown, Haida Gwaii—Queen Charlotte School District 50, Queen Charlotte City public hearing, November 21, 2001.

Our education system must help sustain our economy and resource-based industries by ensuring that relevant education and training opportunities are locally available. One of the problems we experience every year is the exodus of bright, enthusiastic young people who are required to leave Houston to pursue educational opportunities. Many of these young people subsequently find jobs outside our community, often in the areas they moved to for educational purposes. We believe that training people in classrooms or by accessing broadband technology in their local communities — either at home, at school or on the job — is a way to ensure that our communities will grow and flourish in the future. This is your opportunity to invest, not divest, in the future of northern communities. — Bonny Hawley, District of Houston. Houston public hearing, November 22, 2001.

A further aspect of choice is a request for an increase in support of independent, private institutions and recognition of diverse and pluralistic interests (linguistic, cultural, ideological and philosophical) by means of developing more alternative public schools including publicly funded charter schools and private universities.

"Where school boards deny requests from the community for sound additional learning options, charter school legislation would provide a mechanism to accommodate these needs within a framework of strict accountability." — Helen Raham. Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education. Written Submission.

We know that charter schools in the U.S. and in England have been quite successful. I've provided you with some examples of those schools. Charter schools are public schools, just not necessarily union schools, and provide a wonderful means of accountability for both the consumer and the taxpayer. Vouchers are another alternative. Both charters and vouchers would have been viable alternatives for

parents such as me. They would also be great alternatives for parents who want traditional schools. At present, parents are dependent on their individual school boards for these schools. Sadly, many school boards have turned down these requests by well-organized, well-informed parents or consumers. — Heather Maahs. Surrey public hearing, November 1, 2001.

Finally, with respect to choice, several submissions request that the mandatory curriculum for the K-12 system be expanded or altered to ensure that all learners acquire knowledge and perspectives about matters not now given emphasis in the curriculum. Examples of such requests include courses or units of study concerning Aboriginal cultures, second languages, nutrition, fine arts, and physical education/health. An increase in mandatory requirements would in effect limit rather than expand choices available to learners.

4.3 Flexibility

Several submissions express a desire for the education system to become more flexible. Concerns were expressed include scheduling, school and academic calendars, fixed entrance requirements, number of compulsory courses, rigid certification requirements for educators, failure to recognize prior learning, and emphasis on time spent rather than demonstrated achievements. Acknowledgement is given to initiatives taken by the system to: recognize prior learning; facilitate transfer from one institution to another; and enable learners to move in and out of the system without loss of credits. It is clear, however, that not all institutions provide such flexibility and that for the education system as a whole much more could be done in this regard. It is also clear that the challenges for the system as a whole are larger than those facing individual institutions.

In general, it is my opinion that the collective agreement prevents principals from managing their staff effectively and school boards from delivering service effectively. Flexibility and choice are wonderful buzzwords but are next to impossible to implement because of the collective agreement. I recently attended a workshop on private dollars in public education. The presenter stated that the reason his district was able to generate revenue and have a small surplus was because the union in his district does not hold them to the collective agreement. If the union held them to their contract obligations, they would be in a deficit position." — Judy Shirra. Port Coquitlam public hearing, December 10, 2001.

Because our institutions are autonomous, it is not unusual to see a variety of approaches to of enabling the institutions to maintain the currency of their curriculum as delivery of very similar programs of study. That's to be expected. This has the advantage of providing a very healthy competition between institutions to provide alternative programs and better programs. However, in some instances, it does make it difficult for some of our two-year colleges to develop courses and programs that will satisfy the diversity of course requirements for students entering other institutions to complete the third and fourth years of studies for a baccalaureate degree. This problem has been exacerbated since we have grown from having only four degree-granting institutions in 1989 to 14 degree-granting institutions today... We're not arguing to standardize the curriculum. That's what some might argue: let's standardize and make all the programs the same in the first two years. That would

solve the problem, but we think that the variety of programs and the different approaches strengthen the quality of our post-secondary institutions. We think having them become more flexible on what will be acceptable for entrance into third year makes more sense. — Frank Gelin, B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfers. Vancouver public hearing, December 11, 2001.

It is clear from the submissions made, that despite the movement toward a wider range of alternatives over the past decade, both inside and outside the public system, there is strong support for increased access, choice, and flexibility.

5. Quality and Accountability

Submissions that address issues concerning quality and accountability state that the scope and kind of current measures of achievement do not provide an accurate measure of the quality of the education system. In this regard, several submissions ask that more be done to challenge learners and to gather measures of the achievements of all learners in all programs.

"The public school system has a broad range of objectives, including human and social development, in addition to academic achievement. Our organization believes that assessments of the quality of education should reflect that breadth of purpose using a range of instruments to do that assessment. Quantitative assessments with a single, numerical result do not tell the whole story about the education of an individual, nor do they tell the complete story about the quality of the system as a whole..." David Chudnovsky. B.C. Teachers Federation. Written Submission.

A number of the submissions indicate that current measures of quality and information commonly used to ensure accountability are measures of inputs rather than actual results or achievements. Examples of input measures include number of programs or opportunities offered and number of students per unit of funding.

Also related to accountability, is a request that the province set more specific goals and standards to provide clear direction to the system. In this regard, a number of submissions ask that greater emphasis be given to implementing accountability measures that reward achievements and that provide for intervention by the province or local governance body where effectiveness of a program or institution is not evident.

"Teachers, administrators, schools and districts should be evaluated according to their performance and held accountable for results. Districts should be required to measure and report school results in core subjects as annual report cards to the community. Particular emphasis would [sic] be paid to value-added statistics, improvements over the achievement scores of the previous year.

"To reduce the achievement gap between rich and poor students, school boards should be responsible for intervening in failing schools. This may involve replacing administrative leadership or unsuccessful programs and personnel." — Helen Raham, Society for the Advancement of Excellent Education. Written Submission.

Several submissions point to economic factors as barriers to improving the quality of education. In this regard, the Committee's attention was directed to three general concerns:

- (a) The ability of the system to provide services to learners with special needs. The concerns here appear to be both the ability of the system to respond to increased expectations and the ability of the system to meet increased costs related to contractual arrangements concerning inclusion of learners with special needs.
- (b) The ability of institutions to acquire additional funds or to reallocate funds to purchase supplies, technology, equipment, and facilities deemed necessary to create new or additional programs and spaces. Increased or reallocated expenditures are seen to be necessary for the system to meet increases in enrolment (real and potential) and to respond to the human resource training needs of the province.
- (c) The ability of the system to meet increased expenditures resulting from inflation, collective agreements, and rises in regulatory charges.

I personally place less importance on the 'declining teacher resource' than I do with our system's lack of funds for the purchasing of educational tools when they are needed. Class size should be expanded and not decreased to save this money. Computer equipment and software can help educate students in larger class size environments. The equipment is cheaper than the individual. Let's use it. — John Sternig. Written Submission.

Also described as a concern about quality and accountability are several features of the financial allocation systems used to determine funding for school districts and post-secondary institutions. Issues identified were related to inequities, the negative effects of targeting funds, the lack of incentives or rewards for efficiencies, and in some instances the presence of structural disincentives for efficiencies.

Finally, concern is expressed about the negative impacts that may result from a predicted shortage of qualified educators to fill positions created to meet enrolment increases, to fill vacancies that result from a significant retirement factor, and to fill specialized positions created by changes in curriculum offerings.

In summary, as indicated in the above synopsis of the submissions received, over the course of its hearings the Committee, formally and informally, was able to gather useful data and perspectives about the legislative, structural, operational, and financial arrangements that define the education systems in the province. The Committee was thus able to develop an understanding and appreciation about the sometimes conflicting or competing diversity of opinions and desires of those who provide educational services and of those who are the consumers and/or the beneficiaries of such services.

SHORTCOMINGS

As stated at the outset of this report, the Committee acknowledges that the current education system has many positive features and that it compares well to the systems in other provinces and countries. However, the Committee believes that many improvements must be made to enable the system to better respond to the present and future needs of British Columbians. The purposes of this section of this report, therefore, are to highlight eight features that the Committee considers to be shortcomings of the current system.

1. Skills and Knowledge Shortage

There appears to be general agreement that the future prosperity of the province is in great measure dependent upon the education system's ability to produce a much greater number of highly educated citizens whose skills can meet the demands of the modern 'knowledge' economy.

Currently in British Columbia secondary schools preparation for university education is accorded higher status than is preparation for trades or technical education. Yet the economic prosperity of British Columbia appears to be dependent in part on the ability of the education system to produce not only a greater number of university graduates but also a greater number of high school, and trades or technical graduates who are equipped to enter the work force. More will be said about this bias at a later point in this report.

It appears, therefore, that the current system should be aligned in greater measure to produce a greater number of graduates able to assume careers for which there are predicted shortages.

2. Needs of Local Community

It is apparent that the diversity that exists in British Columbia demands an appropriate balance between centralized and decentralized control. As is stated in many of the submissions, 'one size does not fit all'.

For example, the committee was advised that K-12 enrolments in rural areas will decline faster than in urban areas (a trend that is expected to continue for the foreseeable future). It appears then that ways must be found to ensure that schools in less populated areas are able to maintain the full range of programs needed by learners, despite declining enrolments and shrinking resources.

Finally, impact studies conducted by a number of colleges, and university colleges indicate that these institutions could be more responsive to their community needs.

3. System is not seamless

A seamless education system would permit learners at any age and at any stage of their educational development to access the system, step out of the system, and return to the system subject to only one requirement, that is having met the necessary prerequisites, no matter where or how they were attained. Further, a seamless system would permit learners to transfer from one institution to another, or from one program to another and be granted

recognition of and credit for all relevant prior learning. Finally a seamless system would be one that is coordinated so that duplication of services and redundancy of programs occurs only where such is necessary. The current education system of British Columbia can be proud of many features of a seamless system; however, much remains to be done in order for it to be fully seamless.

4. Access is Restricted

A number of factors limit and at times deny full access to education.

- 1) Geographic barriers, such as distance and remoteness or lack of facilities and infrastructure in close proximity create barriers to rural learners.
- 2) Tuition fees that are too low or frozen can have a negative impact on course offerings, but tuition fees that are too high can also deny access because of a learner's inability to pay but fees.
- 3) Admission policies can deny access if entrance standards are such that students who otherwise qualify for admission are turned away.
- 4) Cultural/Language barriers can restrict access for many learners and their families.
- 5) Poverty or low socio-economic status may severely limit a learner's access to educational programs at all levels. Further, factors associated with poverty may prevent pre-school learners from acquiring the capabilities to be successful in school.

5. Choice is Restricted

From one perspective, choice is everywhere in British Columbia education. It is reflected in the residential choices made by families and in the housing prices in neighbourhoods and communities. Choice also takes place when parents decide how to care for the preschool-age child and how families use their knowledge, skill, and social connections to get their children assigned to a particular class or program that has enrolment restrictions. It is present when parents exercise their right to enrol their children in independent schools (often at great expense) or to home school their children. Choice also occurs when parents vie for places in 'magnet' or specialized schools that offer a unique approach or program. These aspects of choice are strongly shaped by the wealth, ethnicity, and social status of parents. From this perspective choice is not a reality for many.

From another perspective there is little choice in British Columbia education. Course requirements for high school graduation and for post-secondary programs are basically the same for all students. Public schools are required to be secular with respect to moral development. Funding is provided on a relatively equitable basis. With few exceptions, the school calendar (days of operation) for the K-12 and for post-secondary institutions is similar in all regions of the province. Also, program offerings in electives areas, in continuing education, and at the post-secondary level vary greatly from region to region and thus choice is restricted by proximity and ability to access. Further, assignment to teachers or teacher assistants provides little choice to parents or learners. Finally, provisions of collective agreements, admission requirements (that at times are arbitrary), and regulatory requirements also determine for the most part what institutions offer, how teachers and

students are assigned to programs, and how schedules are organized, thus resulting in few choices.

From both perspectives, therefore, choice in British Columbia education is both limited and illusionary. Further, the current governance structure with its emphasis on centralized control, traditional structures and bureaucratic practices appears to be a detriment to any attempt to increase variety and or choice.

The desire for greater and more appropriate choice is related to a need to better accommodate the diversity that exists in British Columbia - whether defined by individual or group differences at regional, local, or neighbourhood levels, or in terms of varying demands for educational services.

6. Not all Learning Opportunities are World-Class

It appears that British Columbians want an education system that is both equitable and excellent with respect to opportunities provided and outcomes or achievements resulting from those opportunities. It must be noted that many submissions point to specific programs that are considered to be excellent and to institutions that were judged to be centres of excellence. There seems to be, however, a general belief that the achievements attained by many learners of British Columbia (especially the non-academic) are often mediocre at best. Further, it appears to many that there is little evidence that standards of efficiency and effectiveness are being met by our education systems. Some submissions state that institutions often lack resources thought to be necessary in order for them to provide world-class or quality programs. Such resources include: facilities, technology, equipment, qualified faculty; materials; and access to funding for research.

The Committee notes that quantitative measures such as graduation rates, number of graduate degrees conferred, success of Aborigines, success of new Canadians, and adult illiteracy rates indicate that British Columbia cannot consider itself to be world-class, despite the fact that its expenditures on a per student basis is among the "*highest per-pupil spending in Canada*" (Emery Dosdall, Ministry of Education, Victoria stakeholder meeting, October 16, 2001). Further, the quantitative evidence that is gathered is often too narrow in scope and only some of it pertains to results. Achievement data is limited to test scores derived from measures of academic programs (Foundations Skills Assessments, Provincial Examinations, and International Tests), and other data concerns inputs such as number of students enrolled, number of courses offered, and entrance requirements; or are testimonial in nature. Also used as evidence of quality are examples of attributes such as accessibility, flexibility, and affordability.

7. Services for Early Childhood

Although the Committee's terms of reference do not specifically include preschool, health, and social services, its attention has been directed to the issues concerning the need for and the delivery of such services.

Preschool programs for children from birth to age five are not within the mandate of the public education system. Nor is funding for school-based support services such as: community schools, meals programs, before and after school programs, and support workers.

Instead, those responsibilities are left to parents with the support, in some circumstances, of the Ministry of Children and Family Development and/or the Ministry of Health Services.

The Committee agrees that, as a society, we cannot allow children to be denied the opportunity to develop into fully capable adults. Nor can we, as a society, turn our backs on our ethical responsibilities to provide such opportunities. The Committee also acknowledges the reality that although many children enter Kindergarten ready to learn, a significant number of children enter Kindergarten poorly prepared or unable to effectively learn. Considerable evidence is available to demonstrate that the experiences children have, from birth to age five, can be key determinants of future success. Many of the learning difficulties that children have can be linked in part to infant health issues or to negative early life experiences and traumas.

The Committee further notes that, in many regions of the province, quality preschool opportunities, quality day care, language development programs, health and special needs support services, home support services, and parent access to critical child development information are not readily available. The Committee also acknowledges that such services are important, especially for disadvantaged children, and that neighbourhood schools, houses or family places can and perhaps should be available to be the organizational centre where such services can be coordinated and delivered.

The problems associated with providing such services are not unique to British Columbia. Jurisdictions throughout North America face similar problems and have sought resolution in different ways. The creation of the Ministry of Children and Family Development was in part a response to this issue of coordination of services for children.

8. Parent Involvement

The family remains the most important factor in a child's life. The role of public education is to provide a service without usurping the rights and responsibilities of parents and the family in providing for the overall care of a child. In harmony with this view, the mandate for K-12 public schools clearly states that the primary goal of education is to promote intellectual development and its secondary goals are to work in partnership with the family to assist learners in their human and social development, and in their career development.

Too often parents state that they have felt intimidated by the school, or that they have not been adequately consulted, or that they have not been given opportunities to make choices or to give input. Also, many parents indicate that they wish to have more access to information that will enable them to make better choices on behalf of their children. Such concerns are even greater for parents whose first language is not English and who require the assistance of interpreters or cultural workers in their communications with and from the educational system.

Finally, many parents state that at times their requests for greater participation in the decisions that significantly affect their children are denied on the basis of restrictions placed on the system because of contractual agreements or because of rules and regulations that the administrators of the system claim are beyond their control and cannot be changed.

BARRIERS TO IMPROVEMENT

The Committee examined three key elements of the education system: mandate, governance and management, and service delivery. For each key element the Committee then identified what appear to be major barriers to improvement of British Columbia's education system. The conclusions drawn from such deliberations follow.

1. Mandate

Barriers relevant to issues of mandate relate to an apparent ambiguity as to the role of government in education. Tension exists between requests to expand public education services to secure progress, equity, and opportunity for all individuals, and the need for cost-effectiveness and accountability. On the one hand, the expectations for the system are ever increasing while on the other hand, the public wants assurances that there are measurable benefits to society for its significant investment in education. This tension suggests that the system must be guided by a clearer vision and sense about what the role of the various levels and institutions should be with respect to providing educational opportunities. The following provides further illustration of these barriers.

The post-secondary system has many divisions and is lacking a clear, comprehensive mandate to provide overall direction. Each of the separate divisions: colleges, universities, agencies, institutes and commissions are guided by separate acts and have separate mandates resulting in confusion of purpose and the extent of services to be provided. Further several of the support agencies concerned with post-secondary information gathering, and coordination of programs appear to have duplicate or at times competing mandates.

Lack of coordination, unnecessary duplication of programs or services, and territorialism are all barriers to efficiency and to transition from part of the system to the other. A single mandate statement would provide the basis for better coordination.

The link between the human resource needs of the province and local communities and the programs offered by secondary schools and post secondary institutions can be improved by means of strategic planning.

2. Governance and Management

Growth in the scope and variety of educational services, coupled with increasing demands for additional services, plus complex collective agreements, has resulted in a significant increase in bureaucratic regulations. The need to constrain the growing costs of these services has directed attention to determine ways to reduce inefficiencies and duplication with the system. Further attention has also been directed towards the role and nature of the various levels of governance.

Apparent to the Committee is the question as to whether the current structure of the British Columbia education system adequately serves as an effective means to reflect community priorities and desires about educational opportunities. Also apparent is a somewhat opposing question as to whether or not some functions currently performed by local governing

authorities could be diminished or replaced through the use of technology and improved centralized services.

Related to the consideration of the impact of technology on the need for current local governance and management is the development in the past decade of centralized funding systems, collective agreements, and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Specific aspects of the barriers related to the governance and management of the current system follow.

There are almost 100 separate bodies responsible for the governance and management of education in British Columbia. Several agencies are involved in developing and providing electronic delivery of programs. Every institution has independent personnel and business administration services despite the fact that collective agreements and fiscal arrangements are highly centralized. Further, often in the same community, two or more of the public systems compete for students in the adult and continuing education programs.

Emphasis on separate operations prevents: articulation of programs; transfer of or joint credit for similar courses; joint appointment of highly specialized instructional staff; and the sharing of expensive equipment and facilities. There appears therefore to be unnecessary duplication of programs and services.

The ability of the system to make public policy changes in order to improve access, choice, flexibility and quality is, in many ways, impeded by provisions in collective agreements. Examples of public policy-related innovations that appear in some measure to be blocked from consideration by governance bodies include:

- 1) The extensive use of paraprofessional educators to permit differentiated staffing according to role.
- 2) The determination by on-site educators of instructional groupings (class size) with due consideration of learners needs and the best use of available resources.
- 3) The purchase of educational services from other providers in the public sector or from the private sector where warranted.
- 4) The use of technology to deliver public sector education programs.
- 5) The adjustment of school and academic calendars in response to local interests.
- 6) The implementation of new approaches based on 'best practice' research findings.

It is the role of unions to advance collectively the interests of their membership. While some might argue that they should also act in the public interest, they are under no obligation to do so. It is the role of legislators and members of governing bodies to establish laws and policies which direct the management and delivery of services in accordance with the public interest. When collective agreement provisions supersede legislation and public policy, the public interest is no longer paramount. Some examples to illustrate this dilemma follow.

First, the Committee was advised that the *School Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996, c.412) contains enabling provisions for School Boards to "employ persons other than teachers to assist teachers in carrying out their responsibilities and duties ... under the general supervision of a teacher or administrative officer", and to enter into an agreement to purchase "managerial or other services with respect to the operation of schools in the district or to purchase

educational services that will be under the general supervision of an employee of the board who is a member of the college ...".³ The Committee was informed that the effect of collective bargaining has resulted in school boards not being able to exercise these enabling provisions.

Second, the *School Act* was revised in 1988 to include a requirement that the K-12 system provide 190 days of instruction. The Committee was informed that many school boards subsequently agreed to contract clauses that prevented compliance with the *School Act*. In response, the government of the day altered the provision resulting in fewer days of instruction for the learners. This occurred despite a statutory requirement that the terms and conditions of collective agreements were to be in compliance with the *School Act* (see sections 25 and 27 of the *School Act* and the regulations relevant to these sections). It appears, therefore, that matters of public policy have in varying degrees been improperly determined at the bargaining table.

Third, the Committee was informed that the master agreement covering college instructors contains several provisions which deter the public interest. If future legislation makes any provision null and void, the parties must negotiate a mutually agreeable substitute provision. If there is a conflict between the agreement and the policy of the college governing bodies, the provisions of the agreement prevail. The employer cannot contract out for instructional services previously provided by bargaining members and no employee can be laid off as a direct result of using educational technology. Many local agreements further impair the public interest with provisions that impact on the employer's ability to offer more flexible scheduling and to assign staff effectively and efficiently.

It should be noted that prior to the completion of this report, the Legislature approved two statutes that address some of the barriers noted above. The Committee has therefore adjusted its recommendations to reflect the current conditions.

Although there exist in the present system examples where learners can receive credit for past learning achievements without consideration as to where or how that learning took place, much more needs to be done to recognize prior learning. An emphasis on fixed time requirements, met by attendance at specific institutions, and on having completed specific prerequisite courses, rather than an emphasis on acquired knowledge and skills, can provide an unnecessary barrier to access to and choice of programs.

3. Service Delivery

Consideration of the service delivery features of an education system is a consideration of the culture and traditional practices of the system. In this regard the Committee has identified a number of endemic characteristics of the British Columbia education system that are considered to be barriers to change.

Schools have been and will be expected to play a large role in preparing the learner for the future. Essentially the K-12 system is expected to serve all learners between the age of 5 and 16. At age 16, those who drop out will have little in the way of an educational credential. For those who stay in school, as has been stated elsewhere in this report, there appears to be an overemphasis on the preparation for and the value of university education as compared to

other alternatives. Further, there is some indication that students who opt for non-university related programs are viewed to somehow have failed.

It also appears that many parents view opportunities in technical and trades programs as fine for someone else's child. Yet only about 80% of students graduate from secondary school. Also, only about 30% of the secondary school graduates attend colleges and universities and only about 19% of them obtain a degree. Thus, for the majority of learners who do not go on to higher studies after they leave high school, the current situation is not desirable in that all projections for the future indicate an increasing need for the vast majority of learners to attain education and training beyond high school graduation. What is required are both increased technical and trades options for learners and more effective means to convince learners of the need for them to continue their education.

A system that is driven by rules and regulations can become insensitive and less able to respond to the needs of individuals and exceptions to the rule. Such systems can lead to a sense of powerlessness on the part of both the people who deliver the services and the people who wish to have greater input into the nature and type of service they receive. The service providers often are compelled to resort to the rules and deny the requests of service consumers for alternate considerations.

Added to the rules and regulations of the education system are many statutes and requirements of other agencies and spheres of governance that demand compliance. As a result there is a growing feeling by parents, learners, and taxpayers that they are being asked to pay for and receive a service that they have not, and in many instances would not, choose - a service that is far less responsive than if the system was less bureaucratic.

A clear statement of standards of practice provides guidance to educators with respect to their profession's creed to which, on entry to the profession, they pledge to dedicate themselves. The absence of such a statement is considered by the Committee to be a barrier to enhancing public confidence in educators and to providing focus and direction to the ongoing professional development of educators.

Although each of the organizations to which educators belong has statements that pertain to ethical conduct, there is no clear statement of standards of practice to which the public may turn to determine whether or not the service being provided meets the expectations of the profession. The development and implementation of such a statement would be a worthwhile undertaking. In the opinion of the Committee such matters properly lie with a self-governing body that is separate from unions and is responsive to the public interest.

The Committee was advised that in 1988 the *Teaching Profession Act* (S.B.C. 1987, c.19) assigned a professional development role to the College of Teachers. Section 26 (3) of that act stated that the College's professional development committee may:

- 26 (3) a. Carry out, cooperate in, or facilitate programs of professional development whose objectives are to improve the quality of educational services,
- b. Cooperate with teacher training institutions in the design and evaluation of teacher training programs leading to certification by the college,
- c. Carry out, cooperate in, or facilitate in-service programs designed to ensure the currency of general teacher competence,

- d. In cooperation with the qualifications and discipline committees, develop specific programs to assist individual teachers, and
- e. Establish provincial specialist associations to provide advice on professional development in specific fields of curricula.

The Committee was advised that, in deference to the BC Teachers Federation's desire that it retain responsibility for teacher professional development, the College of Teachers refrained from engaging in activities pertaining to subsections 3(a), (c) and (e). The Committee was also advised that the *Teaching Profession Act* was subsequently amended to remove those responsibilities.

The Committee was made aware of instances where, despite research evidence that more effective practices could be employed, the system continues to follow practices based on tradition or on unsubstantiated opinions. Examples of potentially more effective practices include:

- 1) The use of acceleration as a method to respond to the needs of more able learners such as the gifted.
- 2) The use of research based methods to teach reading to learners who would benefit from such approaches.
- 3) The use of a learner's first language as the initial language of instruction to establish a firm foundation in language acquisition prior to instruction in a second language.
- 4) The consideration of time for instruction as a variable rather than a constant. That is to predicate instruction and programs on the basis that it will take a different amount of time for different students to learn the same content.

The point here is not that the above examples are not without controversy, but rather that the education system would benefit from a definite stress on the need to apply the findings of research and best practices as they become known. The establishment of a 'centre of excellence' for research in education has been suggested as one approach to addressing this barrier.

Further, the ability for more immediate and appropriate response to the findings of research requires far more local professional control over the way in which groups are created for instruction. By necessity, such decisions will require more local professional autonomy and accountability for education professionals over instructional matters than is the case at present. It is the opinion of the Committee that centralized controls over instruction by provincial regulations, board policies, or provisions of collective agreements will at times prevent the adoption of best practices. Such centralization will result in less, rather than more exploration of alternative methods to teach and to learn.

It appears to the Committee that there is a need for comprehensive strategic planning for the education system as a whole. The Committee has identified the following specific examples:

- 1) Little coherent planning for the education system as a whole so that the component parts (preschool, K-12, postsecondary, and business and private education) have a better fit with each other.

- 2) Inadequate processes for identifying what would clearly be in the best interests of the Province or local communities and what priorities should guide the allocation of resources.
- 3) Insufficient gathering and analysis of outcomes data to enable better decisions regarding effectiveness and efficiency.
- 4) Resistance or reluctance to accept genuine involvement of parents, learners, and other stakeholders in a meaningful and consistent way.
- 5) Resistance to stepping out of old or traditional patterns, to surrendering existing roles, and to sharing resources.

Education in British Columbia is a complex mix of policies, politics, procedures, places, pupils, personnel, parents and the public. There is no argument concerning the centrality of the educator's role in the provision of educational opportunities. The submissions made to the Committee provide ample evidence of the importance of qualified, dedicated educators. The submissions also reflect a high regard for the educators who deliver educational services in this province. In most instances, the interaction between the learner as student and the educator as instructor is central to the success of the enterprise as measured by achievements of the learner. However, the focus of the enterprise is not always on meeting the needs of the individual learner and on improving the learning opportunities that are provided by the public institutions. Two barriers with respect to personnel matters were brought to the attention of the Committee.

First, as has been stated earlier in this report, there are predictions that the system is facing a significant shortage of qualified personnel to meet growing enrolments and to replace existing staff as they retire or move out of the system. Detailed reports and recommendations concerning this barrier to improvement are a matter of record. It should be noted, however, that most projections assume that the current arrangements and practices regarding recruitment, training, and deployment of personnel will remain unchanged. There may be merit, therefore, to considering alternatives to the status quo. Some examples of such alternatives have been presented elsewhere in this report and include the considerations listed below.

- 1) Instructional groupings determined by factors other than a predetermined formula. In this regard the Committee agrees with the conclusions presented by the 1988 Report of the Royal Commission on Education which states,

In sum, the position taken by this Commission is that students at different levels of personal and intellectual development require different learning conditions for the realization of desired levels of progress, growth, and achievement, and that class size is one important and critical factor to be considered in this regard. Small classes have the potential to offer better opportunities for teaching and learning. However, since schools differ in terms of the needs of their teachers and students, and since class size is so inexorably related to other school and classroom factors influencing achievement, rigid formulas dictating maximum class sizes are no guarantee of improved achievement. Class sizes are best established at the school level, on a case-by-case basis, with meaningful participation by classroom teachers. That is not to say that general guidelines at the district or provincial level are unnecessary. Rather, lack of rigidity

*allows for an essential degree of individual school autonomy in organizing the school for instruction.*⁴

- 2) The employment of paraprofessionals working under the direction of master teachers.
- 3) The purchase of educational services from outside the system to meet the needs of students that cannot be met efficiently or effectively by the system.

The second barrier related to personnel matters concerns the purpose, quality, and relevance of professional development. It is evident to the Committee that continued professional growth is considered to be important by educators, parents and the general public. However, it is also evident that opportunities and expectations for professional development can be greatly improved, especially with regards to keeping up to date with and implementing best practices.

Professional development has been discussed above with the note that the College of Teachers has yet to act on the powers it has been given with respect to overseeing the professional development of teachers. Professionalism can be ensured only when professionals see themselves as life-long learners. Such a requirement is realistic only if accompanied by certain structures that provide support and sustained focus. Further, professional development must be structured to reflect the best of what is known about teaching and learning.

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT

The Committee perceives that, despite the diversity of opinion about educational matters, there exists among citizens in the Province a predominant vision for the British Columbia education system.

The economic, social and democratic interests of learners, of local communities, and of the Province are best served by a seamless education system that enables all British Columbians to access a variety of world-class learning opportunities.

The above statement directs attention to the key features of a preferred education system. First is the system's responsibility to instil in students respect for the social and democratic values of society and to be responsive to the individual needs and career aspirations of the learners. Second, the system, in addition to meeting the needs of learners, should be responsive to the interests of the community and as such it must be tied more directly to provincial and local strategies for economic and community development. Third, the programs or opportunities provided to learners by a preferred education system should meet world-class or exemplary standards of effectiveness, efficiency and value to both the learner and the community. Finally, the preferred education system is one that has a strong learning culture, and provides accessible and flexible life-long learning opportunities for all.

The Committee believes that to fully attain this vision the system must achieve five goals.

1. *Renew focus on learning, on meeting the needs of learners, and on serving the interests of both the local community and the Province.*
2. *Set high standards and continuously pursue excellent performance.*
3. *Improve access and success for all learners by offering greater variety, flexibility and choice, and by becoming seamless.*
4. *Extend autonomy and enhance accountability by decentralizing authority and responsibility.*
5. *Make more effective use of financial, physical and human resources to increase choice at all levels and to expand post-secondary capacity in areas of potential skills shortages.*

To achieve the five goals the Committee proposes strategies for changes to the mandate of the education system, the governance and management of the education system, and the ways by which educational services are delivered. For each strategy the Committee recommends actions to address the barriers discussed earlier in this report.

Mandate

The Committee notes that there is an official and widely known mandate to guide the entire K-12 system. However, there is not a single official mandate to guide the post-secondary system. Further there exists a plethora of statutes, each governing a specific aspect of the education system. For example, more than a dozen statutes concern the affairs of the post secondary system. Also, despite its importance to the future success of learners, there is no official educational mandate concerning preschool education.

The Committee believes, therefore, that in order to achieve a seamless system, actions must be taken to create a single mandate for the entire system and to clarify the roles of the system's component parts. The Committee also believes that such a mandate will provide guidance to the system and will protect the interests of the public and the learners of British Columbia.

Your Committee recommends the following actions:

- 1 *Create a mandate statement for the entire education system that:*
 - a) *is modelled after the current mandate for the K-12 system;*
 - b) *acknowledges the importance of all citizens being able to access both broad-based and career-specific learning opportunities throughout their lives;*
 - c) *describes the responsibility of each level of authority for three goals of education:*
 - i) *intellectual development,*
 - ii) *human/social development, and*
 - iii) *career development;*
 - d) *defines the function and priority for each level of the system, and indicates for each level the relative importance of:*
 - i) *readiness,*
 - ii) *foundation skills,*
 - iii) *employability,*
 - iv) *research and development, and*
 - v) *life-long learning*
 - e) *outlines expectations regarding:*
 - i) *equity and accessibility,*
 - ii) *flexibility and choice,*
 - iii) *quality and relevance, and*
 - iv) *accountability, and*
 - f) *promotes seamlessness between:*
 - i) *early childhood education,*
 - ii) *foundation education,*
 - iii) *advanced education,*
 - iv) *continuing education, and*
 - v) *research and development.*
- 2 *Consider the merits and feasibility of extending the mandate of public education to include early childhood education.*
- 3 *Ensure the primacy of the public interest by clearly indicating in legislation that:*
 - a) *the mandate statement must be reflected in all documents, reports and plans produced at any level of the education system;*

- b) *statutory provisions supersede the provisions of collective agreements or other contractual arrangements;*
 - c) *institutions have the flexibility to:*
 - i) *institute best practices,*
 - ii) *organize and schedule learning opportunities, and*
 - iii) *assign staff as required for the effective and efficient delivery of education services.*
 - d) *design, deliver and fund professional development in accordance with their plans for improvement.*
- 4 Set strategic direction for the Province to ensure that:
- a) *the education system addresses the anticipated employment needs of the Province;*
 - b) *residents of British Columbia, who have attained the prerequisite provincial competencies and standards, have access to advanced education;*
 - c) *learners and parents are informed about the future employment opportunities in the Province;*
 - d) *unreasonable barriers to learners with special challenges are removed;*
 - e) *technology is used to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of learning opportunities and support services;*
 - f) *specific institutions are designated to engage in research and development into issues of societal importance; and*
 - g) *research in education is both conducted and assembled, and the findings of research are communicated widely throughout the system.*
- 5 Review, revise and consolidate the existing statutes governing public education.

Governance and Management

The Committee notes that governance and management responsibilities for preschool to post secondary learners are currently assigned to three ministries, sixty school districts, eleven colleges, five university colleges, and twelve post-secondary institutions or agencies. The Committee believes that the existing division of authority and responsibility results in unnecessary duplication of services and programs and creates barriers to the development of a seamless system. The Committee is also of the opinion that access, flexibility, choice and quality are in many ways constrained by over regulation and by some provisions of collective agreements. Therefore, the Committee has concluded that the system would benefit from clearer direction, greater accountability, and more meaningful involvement of learners, parents and community members.

The Committee discussed the merits of the governance models used in some other jurisdictions in which a single Ministry directs, monitors and funds *early childhood education* (initiatives in partnership with families and other agencies to address readiness issues from birth to school entry); *foundation education* (opportunities to assist all learners in attaining the competencies in the core curriculum); *advanced education* (opportunities to assist learners in attaining the competencies for a chosen certificate, diploma or degree); *continuing*

education (non-credit opportunities primarily paid for by users); and *research and development* (opportunities to engage in activities of societal importance).

The Committee also discussed a more regional approach to governance as it related to both the K-12 and post-secondary models. The Committee feels these are issues worthy of future discussion and deliberations.

Your Committee recommends the following actions

- 6 *Designate specific institutions as "provincial institutions" and authorize them to offer specialized advanced education opportunities and to be centres of research excellence.*
- 7 *Enhance the performance by:*
 - a) *differentiating clearly between governance and management responsibilities; and*
 - b) *providing orientation and ongoing training to members of governing bodies and senior managers.*
- 8 *Require all authorities and institutions to involve community members and parents or learners, as appropriate, in creating and monitoring their service plans and in formulating their annual performance reports.*
- 9 *Require that service plans and annual performance reports are made available to interested persons and groups.*
- 10 *Permit education authorities and institutions to include in their service plans requests for time-specific waivers from provincial constraints they believe are impairing their performance.*
- 11 *Continue to develop a system for funding education that:*
 - a) *is simple, equitable, predictable and transparent;*
 - b) *ensures that appropriate funding flows to the service providers selected by each learner;*
 - c) *minimizes the impact of economic circumstance on each learner's access and prospects for success;*
 - d) *considers the principle that, as learners proceed to higher certification, they should contribute an increasing share of the actual costs of advanced education and the anticipated value of the particular education to the learner; and*
 - e) *facilitates monitoring the effectiveness and prudence of resource utilization.*
- 12 *Enhance accountability throughout the system by implementing:*
 - a) *a framework to ensure that authorities, institutions, and individuals at all levels, are accountable for performance, and are expected to continuously improve and adapt to changing needs and circumstances;*
 - b) *an information system which collects and reports outcomes data on growth in learner achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, and compliance with relevant legislative and policy frameworks, as well as information on emerging trends and needs;*
 - c) *a periodic, comprehensive system for external auditing learner achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, compliance, and development in all publicly-funded institutions; and*

- d) *procedures for progressively greater external intervention into the governance and management of authorities and institutions who consistently demonstrate less than adequate performance.*
- 13 *Identify a fair process that will establish the terms of employment for all staff employed in the education system without disruption of learning opportunities.*
- 14 *Institute an appeals process that will expeditiously settle any student or parental concerns not resolved by administrators and governance bodies at the institutional level.*
- 15 *Consider the most effective and efficient provision of administrative functions such as accounting, payroll, human resources, facilities maintenance, capital construction, and transportation.*

Service Delivery

The Committee notes that the system tends to be focussed on the means of education without sufficient attention to outcomes. Reliance on bureaucratic controls and limitations resulting from collective agreements creates inflexibility and unresponsiveness and interfere with professionalism and best practice. As a result, the system is often seen to be driven by the interests of the system or the service providers rather than by the interests of the learners and the public. The Committee believes that in order to achieve a seamless system that optimizes access, flexibility, choice, and quality, the Province must set high expectations and consistent standards for results and enable flexible delivery. In addition, the Committee believes that the culture at all levels of the system must be one of service oriented professionalism.

Your Committee recommends the following actions:

- 16 *Establish a standing committee of educators and non-educators to identify and continuously review the competencies and standards that must be met to qualify for each certificate, diploma or degree.*
- 17 *Organize the provincial competencies and standards for certificates, diplomas and degrees so that learners are able to pursue a career path in stages, to accelerate, to transfer laterally, to receive partial credits, and where desirable, to obtain interim certification if a significant portion of the provincial competencies and standards has been attained.*
- 18 *Permit individual institutions to award education certificates, diplomas and degrees in accordance with the provincial competencies and standards, but also designate a provincial agency to award certificates, diplomas and degrees to learners who demonstrate attainment of the provincial competencies and standards without regard for how, where, or when they have gained them.*
- 19 *Thoroughly review the legislation and the structures pertaining to apprenticeship training, to ensure the system meets the needs of British Columbians.*
- 20 *Empower authorities and institutions to design and offer learning opportunities that will enable learners to meet the provincial competencies and standards.*

- 21 *Designate one department or agency to develop a provincial infrastructure for on-line learning, and ensure that all institutions have easy access to this infrastructure so that they can support learners who opt to use an on-line approach for all or part of their education.*
- 22 *Once learners complete the core curriculum, they are entitled to choose from a series of substantive pathways leading to certificates, diplomas or degrees and to attend any institution offering pathways.*
- 23 *Establish a College of Educators responsible for certification, standards of practice, ethics, enforcement, and professional development.*
- 24 *Ensure the College of Educators serves the public interest by appointing sufficient community members to its governing body.*
- 25 *Consider that membership in the College of Educators be the only compulsory membership for professional educators employed at all levels of the system, including those in management positions.*
- 26 *Require authorities and institutions to assess their effectiveness and efficiency by gathering outcomes data about learner achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, and compliance with the relevant legislative and policy frameworks; and to recognize individuals and groups who foster outstanding levels of learner achievement and stakeholder satisfaction, or who contribute significantly to research about the use of best practice.*
- 27 *Require authorities, institutions and individuals throughout the system to:*
 - a) *prepare annual plans for improvement and development based on measures of performance results and consideration of research concerning best practices, and*
 - b) *direct funds and release time for staff to engage in professional development that addresses identified gaps in current performance or emerging needs.*

LOOKING AHEAD

The province's education system could become a model in Canada, one that breaks the bounds of the status quo.

This report should be considered to be a beginning of an ongoing process to create and sustain a seamless education system that serves the interests of learners and the public and that enables all British Columbians to access a variety of world-class learning opportunities. Some of your Committee's recommendations will require additional investigation and debate. Others should be considered for action now.

What is required for both the long term and the short term is an ongoing candid, fundamental and non-ideological discussion of what education is and should be. If the Legislative Assembly so wishes, your Committee would be pleased to assist with this continuing dialogue.

APPENDICES

Appendix I - Endnotes

- ¹ Fleming, Thomas. Review and commentary on schooling in Canada 1993: a report to UNESCO. University of Victoria, 1993
- ² Report of the Royal Commission on Education 1988: A Legacy for Learners. Pp. 219-220
- ³ School Act: Revised Statutes of British Columbia, 1996.
- ⁴ Report of the Royal Commission on Education 1988: A Legacy for Learners. P. 140

Appendix II - List of Witnesses

	Submission Number	Public Hearing
Susan Abbott	347	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Betty Abbs	219	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Dolly Abney School District No. 67	275	
Cathy Abraham North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council	289	
Barbara Adams	166	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Eve Adams Bayview Community School Advisory Council		11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Nadine Adams	150	
Judy Agnew Burnaby District Parent Advisory Council	407	
Joan Alderdice Aspire Intergative Remedial Education Society	319	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Erin Alec		22-Nov-01, Houston
Nelson Allen Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District	452	
Karen Anderson	414	
Laurie Anderson Vancouver School Board	268	
Lynne Anderson Prince George School District Youth Care Workers	211	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Brenda Andersson Northwest Community College, Houston	206	22-Nov-01, Houston
Dr. Ian Andrews B.C. Centre for International Education	5	17-Oct-01, Victoria
S. Ang	152	
Joanna S. Anonychuk	153	
Lesley Ansell-Shepherd Gifted Children's Association of B.C.		26-Oct-01, Victoria
Lesley Ansell-Shepherd	161	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Gerry Armstrong Ministry of Advanced Education	2	16-Oct-01, Victoria
Melanie Arnis	251	
Irene Au	89	
Tom Austin Royal Roads University	466	26-Oct-01, Victoria

Don Avison University Presidents Council	1	16-Oct-01, Victoria
Ayla Aykurek Point Grey Parents' Advisory Council	276	
Kenneth Baker Gladstone Secondary School Parent Advisory Council	330	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Reggi Balabanov B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils	22	24-Oct-01, Victoria
Virginia Balcom Hastings - Tillicum School Community Advisory Council		01-Nov-01, Surrey
Virginia Balcom Vancouver Community School District Advisory Council	317	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Lendina Bambrick Kootenay Lake School District		07-Nov-01, Cranbrook
Kari Barber North Peace Primary Teachers Association	51	05-Nov-01, Dawson Creek
Bill Bargeman Vancouver Secondary Teachers Association	314	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Lynne Barisoff	247	
Julia Barker	426	
Dr. Roger Barnsley University College of the Cariboo	111	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Bill Bartleman		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Susan Bartleman	294	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Dr. Harold Bassford University College of the Fraser Valley; University Colleges of B.C.		16-Oct-01, Victoria
Mary Elizabeth Bayer Culture Acts Now	416	
Janet Beales Camosun College Faculty Association	160	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Andrea Beaubien Squamish Elementary School PAC	93	
Cathy Bedard B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils		24-Oct-01, Victoria
Gary Begin Burnaby District Community School Advisory and Coordinating Committee	307	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Carol Bell Lucerne Association for Community Education	104	08-Nov-01, Kelowna

Maggie Bell-Brown		
Haida Gwaii - Queen Charlotte School District	201	21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Janet Benjamin		11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Charley Beresford	162	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Maria Besso	116	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Radhika Bhagat	393	
Elise Bienvenu	37	
Kathleen Bigsby		
Standing Committee on Evaluation and Accountability, Advanced Education Council	311	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Kathryn Bindon		
Okanagan University College	101	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Clive S. Bird		
West Vancouver School District No. 45	364	
John Birnie		
Northern Lights College	47	05-Nov-01, Dawson Creek
John Black		
Malaspina Faculty Association	17	
David Blacoe	242	
Julia Blockberger		
British Columbia Institute of Technology	98	
Susan Boisvert		
District Parent Advisory Council, Chilliwack School District		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Milan Boljuncic		
Sir John Franklin Community School Parent Advisory Council	320	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Patricia Boname		
Open Learning Agency	9	17-Oct-01, Victoria
Hon. Shirley Bond		
Minister of Advanced Education		16-Oct-01, Victoria
Dr. Ron Bordessa		
Royal Roads University	466	26-Oct-01, Victoria
Kim Bothen		
Hastings Elementary Community School Parent Advisory Council		11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Cheryl Bourgeau	144	
Sandra Bourque		
Richmond School District	156	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Sandra Boyle		
Douglas College		25-Oct-01, Victoria
Leah Bradish	128	07-Nov-01, Cranbrook
Donna Bradley		01-Nov-01, Surrey

Joanne Bragg East Kootenay Educational Partnership	81	07-Nov-01, Cranbrook
Aidan Brand		20-Nov-01, Victoria
Penny Brand		20-Nov-01, Victoria
Peter Brand		20-Nov-01, Victoria
Kim Brar Dasmesh Punjabi School	29	
Beverly Brooks Prince George Montessori Education Society	228	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Joanne Brooks Sir John Franklin Community School Parent Advisory Council		11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Joseph R. Brooks School District No. 46-Sunshine Coast	362	
Therese Brooks	280	
Deborah Brown Queen Charlotte District Teachers Association	199	21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Seeber Brown	55	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Sharon Brown	365	
Susan Brown	358	
Susan Brown George Pringle Secondary School Parent Advisory Council	108	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Vern Brown Masset Village Council		21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Randy Bruce Centre for Curriculum Transfer and Technology	470	26-Oct-01, Victoria
Michelle Bryant Queen Charlotte District Teachers Association	199	21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Dr. Eric Buckley Central Okanagan School District	114	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Dr. Lyse Burgess B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils; Saanich School District		24-Oct-01, Victoria
Dr. Lyse Burgess	158	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Linda Burkholder Peace River South Teachers Association	39	05-Nov-01, Dawson Creek
Susan Burns	376	
Raven Butler		21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Bob Buxton Cranbrook School Counsellors Association	133	07-Nov-01, Cranbrook

Tracie Buzza Burnaby District Community School Advisory and Coordinating Committee	307	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Verna Cadwallader		01-Nov-01, Surrey
Cathie Camley Learning Disabilities Association of BC	391	
Ida Campbell Peace River North School District	235	05-Nov-01, Dawson Creek
Ken Campbell Fraser-Cascade School District	419	
Pam Campbell Cowichan Valley School District, Board of Trustees	408	
Roberta Lee Campbell	94	
Adriane Carr Green Party of B.C.	159	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Roger Carr Association of British Columbia Educators	184	
Paula and Bob Casault	180	
Kathy Cassels Breakfast for Learning	386	
Paul Ceretti	222	23-Nov-01, Prince George
L. Chalmers	76	
Susan Chambers Franklin Covey Canada Ltd.	308	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Linda Champion Burnaby District Parent Advisory Council	407	
Ann Chasmar Bayview Community School Advisory Council	71	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Dean Chatterson Kimberley Teachers Association		07-Nov-01, Cranbrook
Bev Christensen Prince George School District	234	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Loyd Christensen	65	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Pat Christensen		22-Nov-01, Houston
Bill Christie Prince George School District	234	23-Nov-01, Prince George
David Chudnovsky B.C. Teachers Federation	27	24-Oct-01, Victoria
David Chudnovsky B.C. Teachers' Federation (for the Coalition for Public Education)	56	
Lydia Chung B.C. Language Coordination Association	64	

Rita Churchill	49	05-Nov-01, Dawson Creek
Hon. Christy Clark Minister of Education		16-Oct-01, Victoria
Jennifer Cliff-Marks Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy	404	
Robert Clift Confederation of University Faculty Associations of B.C.		24-Oct-01, Victoria
Robert Clift Confederation of University Faculty Associations of B.C. (for the Coalition for Public Education)	56	
Jon and Dawn Climie	366	
Patricia Clough Association of Educators of Gifted, Talented and Creative Children of B.C.		08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Dave Clyne	57	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Joan Coates	463	
Courtney Collins B.C. Student Voice		25-Oct-01, Victoria
Valerie Colwell Delta District Parent Advisory Council	421	
Gordon Comeau B.C. School Trustees Association	469	26-Oct-01, Victoria
Philip Connolly	392	
Brian Conrad East Kootenay Educational Partnership	81	
Donna Conroy		07-Nov-01, Cranbrook
Mary Cooper Surrey Intermediate Teachers Association	67	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Ronald J. Correll Contract Training and Marketing Society	16	25-Oct-01, Victoria
Carol Cosco	441	
Adelina Cossalter	147	
Louise Cote-Madill Association Locale des Enseignants Francophones et d'Immersion	229	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Kerry D. Coulson	381	
Darwin Coxson Confederation of University Faculty Associations of B.C. (for the Coalition for Public Education)	56	
Darwyn Coxson Confederation of University Faculty Associations of B.C.	24	24-Oct-01, Victoria

Allan Coyle Okanagan University College		08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Linda Craig	272	
Barbara Crocker Vancouver-Richmond Health Board	350	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Tyler Crosby Queen Charlotte District Teachers Association	199	21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Delta Fay Cruickshank	360	
Brigid Cumming Port Clements Elementary School Parent Advisory Council		21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Ivor Cura	392	
Kathy Currier Parent Liasion Committee	465	
Sharon Cutcliffe B.C. Principals and Vice-Principals Association; B.C. Student Voice		25-Oct-01, Victoria
Paul Czene	73	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Stu Dale B.C. Principals and Vice-Principals Association	323	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Mike Darnbrough Central Okanagan School District	118	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Ken Davidson Canadian Union of Public Employees, B.C. Division (for the Coalition for Public Education)	56	
Margaret Davidson Canadian Parents for French, B.C and Yukon	332	
Sandra Davie Prince George District Teachers Association	224	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Margaret Davis International Public Secondary Education Association	450	
Dr. George Davison Faculty Association of the College of New Caledonia	223	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Harold Daykin	291	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Adrian de Groot	238	
Rick de Jong Helen Gorman Elementary Parent Advisory Council	88	
Geoff Dean Kwantlen Faculty Association; Kwantlen Student Association	346	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Tom Dean Lakes District Secondary School Leadership Class	207	22-Nov-01, Houston
Carol deGans Prince George School District Youth Care Workers	211	23-Nov-01, Prince George

Susanne Delisimunovic		01-Nov-01, Surrey
C. Denesiuk		
School District No. 67- Okanagan Skaha	263	
Mark Dennison	71	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Ginny Diebolt		
North Vancouver School District	59	
Wendy Dinahan	87	
Jennifer Dionne	211	
Adrian Dix		
Canadian Parents for French, B.C and Yukon		11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Maureen Dockendorf		
Blackburn Elementary School		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Teresa Dockstader	115	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Laureen Doerksen		
Coquitlam School District		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Shirley Dorais		
University College of the Cariboo	111	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Dale Dorn		
Vancouver Community College	23	24-Oct-01, Victoria
Emery Dosdall		
Ministry of Education	3	16-Oct-01, Victoria
Stephanie Douglas		
Britannia Community Services Society	333	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Alice Downing		
University of Northern British Columbia		23-Nov-01, Prince George
Stephane Drolet		
la Federation des Parents Francophones de Colombie-Britannique	471	26-Oct-01, Victoria
Lou Dryden		
North Island College	236	
Judy Dueck		
School District No. 42-Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	353	
Leanne Dufour	344	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Silvia Dyck		
Chilliwack School District	301	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
John Eaton		
British Columbia Teacher-Librarians Association	109	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Annie Ehman		
Vancouver Inner City Parents		01-Nov-01, Surrey
Yvonne Elden		
Peace River South School District	41	05-Nov-01, Dawson Creek
Joanne Ellis	136	07-Nov-01, Cranbrook

Cindy English Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils of Saanich School Districts	165	20-Nov-01, Victoria
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Nino Fabbro Career Educators Local Specialty Association	230	23-Nov-01, Prince George
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Tom Ferris Greater Victoria School District	176	20-Nov-01, Victoria
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Patricia Finlay B.C. Teacher-Librarians Association	66	01-Nov-01, Surrey
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Barbara Forsberg-McNab	422	
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Ellie Grogan Prince George Primary Teachers Association	233	23-Nov-01, Prince George
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Grant Gustafson		21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Larry Haberlin Area Counsellors, Vancouver School Board	327	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
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Bev Hosker		
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Kim Howland		
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Lorraine McGrath Kelowna Chamber of Commerce; University of Southern British Columbia Coalition	117	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
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Daniel McLeod College of New Caledonia		23-Nov-01, Prince George
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Michael Parker		11-Dec-01, Vancouver
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Wayne Swim	62	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Mary Talbot		
Sir William MacDonald Elementary School Parent Advisory Council		01-Nov-01, Surrey
Selina Talib	378	
Lesley Tannen		
Desert Rose Society, People with Disabilities Network	110	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Hugh Tayler	413	
Caleb Taylor		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Jim Taylor		
Greater Victoria Community Schools Group		20-Nov-01, Victoria
Vicky Taylor	296	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Mary Teixeira	83	
Ginny Thomson	389	

Kathleen Thomson Coquitlam Teachers Association	305	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Louise Thorburn B.C. School District Continuing Education Directors Association		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Rosalind Thorn Northern B.C. Construction Association	220	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Diane Tijman B.C. Association of Teachers of Modern Languages	63	
Carolyn Timms	271	
Lynda Toews Adult Educators Provincial Specialist Association	324	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Kay Treadgold British Columbia Teacher-Librarians Association	109	08-Nov-01, Kelowna
Lenora Trenaman Kootenay Lake District Parent Advisory Council	451	
Leslie Triplett Kwantlen University College	15	25-Oct-01, Victoria
Brenda and Dale Tripp	140	
Sandy Trolan Special Education Association	231	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Dr. Jaap Tuinman Open Learning Agency	9	17-Oct-01, Victoria
Marnee Tull B.C. Student Voice	11	25-Oct-01, Victoria
Brenda Turner B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils		24-Oct-01, Victoria
Jane Turner	312	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Sanda Turner Western Society for Children with Birth Disorders		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Dr. David Turpin University of Victoria	157	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Art Uhl		10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Kirsten Urdahl-Serr Association of Educators of Gifted, Talented and Creative Children of B.C.	186	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Cindy Vaartnou Victoria READ Society	355	
Jack VandenBorn Houston Christian School	209	22-Nov-01, Houston
Victoria Vaseleniuck Canadian Parents for French - Nelson Chapter	382	
P. Visca	143	
Andrea Vollans		25-Oct-01, Victoria

Ben Vriend Computer-Using Educators of B.C.	293	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Katherine Wagner Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows School District	340	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Cari Warner	250	
Susan Warren	146	
Rilla Warwick Cariboo-Chilcotin School District	215	23-Nov-01, Prince George
George Watson East Kootenay Educational Partnership	81	07-Nov-01, Cranbrook
Terri Watson	423	
Lorna Way Peace River South Teachers Association	183	
Sandra Webster-Worthy		20-Nov-01, Victoria
Duncan White Queen Charlotte District Teachers Association	199	21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Jenny White Queen Charlotte District Teachers Association	199	21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Theresa White Forest Resource Educators' Network of BC	458	
Patricia Wick Thibault Prince George School District	234	23-Nov-01, Prince George
John Wiebe	284	
Sandra Wieland	415	
Sandra Wieland Learning Disabilities Association-South Vancouver Island	262	
Margaret Wiem	239	
Carol Wilkins	349	
Karen Williams Burnaby Teachers Association	306	10-Dec-01, Port Coquitlam
Merle Williams Queen Charlotte District Teachers Association	199	21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Trevor Williams Prince George United Way	212	23-Nov-01, Prince George
Judi Wilson School District No. 64-Gulf Islands	285	
Val Windsor Delta Teachers Association	424	
John Winter B.C. Chamber of Commerce	163	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Andrea Winterbottom Eastview Parent Advisory Council	455	

Catherine Wishart College of New Caledonia		23-Nov-01, Prince George
Susan Witter Douglas College	14	25-Oct-01, Victoria
Alice Wong	139	
Cynthia Wong		01-Nov-01, Surrey
Dr. Shirley M. Wong University of British Columbia	20	
Dan Wood Contract Training and Marketing Society	16	25-Oct-01, Victoria
Irene Wotton St. James Community Square	409	
J. Wratisiav	377	
Lynnette Wray Community Healing and Intervention Program	260	
Lise Wrigley	162	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Debby Wuthrich	410	
John Wyndham Surrey Teachers Association	58	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Andrew Wynn-Williams B.C. Chamber of Commerce	163	20-Nov-01, Victoria
Sheryl Yaremco Bulkley Valley School District	208	22-Nov-01, Houston
Glenn Young Physical Education Provincial Specialist Association	338	11-Dec-01, Vancouver
Marnie Younger		21-Nov-01, Queen Charlotte City
Anita Zaenker Canadian Federation of Students; Coalition for Public Education	56	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Wendy Zajac	151	
Bohdan Zajcew Association for Tele-Education in Canada	61	01-Nov-01, Surrey
Arlene Zuckernick	91	